

**Claims**

1. A pellet comprising a compacted inner matrix and at least one coating,  
wherein the inner matrix comprises viable micro-organisms and the coating  
comprises a moisture barrier, characterised in that the pellet has a volume of  
at least  $0.02\text{cm}^3$ .
2. Pellet according to claim 1, wherein the inner matrix, before or shortly after  
the coating, is characterised by a water activity of below 0.3.
3. Pellet according to claim 1, wherein the inner matrix has an envelope density  
of more than  $0.8\text{g/cm}^3$ .
4. Pellet according to claim 1, which comprises  $10^5$  to  $10^{14}$  viable micro-  
organisms.
5. Pellet according to claim 1, wherein the inner matrix further comprises at  
least one component selected from the group of fillers, functional ingredients,  
lubricants, plasticizers, food-grade binders, and combinations thereof.
6. Pellet according to claim 1, wherein the inner matrix further comprises  
ingredients selected from the group of digestible starches, resistant starches,  
other fibre, milled cereals, dried and milled vegetables, cellulose and  
cellulose derivatives, pet food, maltodextrin, chicory flour, protein isolates,  
yeast extracts, and mixtures thereof.
7. Pellet according to claim 1, wherein the coating comprises a food-grade  
moisture barrier.
8. Pellets within a food product, wherein the pellets are the pellets according to  
any of claim 1 to 7 and the inner matrix of the pellets comprises at least one  
component of the food product.
9. Delivery system of probiotics, which comprises the pellets according to any  
of claim 1 to 8.

10. Use of the pellets of any of claim 1 to 8 as a delivery system for probiotics in a moist, semi-moist, or semi-dry food product.

5 11. A process for obtaining a pellets to supplement a food product with viable micro-organisms, which comprises the steps of mixing a preparation of micro-organisms and further components, drying the mixture to an  $a_w$  below 0.3, compacting the mixture under pressure to obtain pellets comprising a volume of at least  $0.02\text{cm}^3$ , and coating the pellets with a moisture barrier.

10 12. The process according to claim 12, wherein the further components comprise at least part of the ingredients of the food product.

15 13. A food product comprising the pellets according to any of claims 1 to 7, wherein the food product and the inner matrix of the pellet share at least one component, ingredient or constituent.

20 14. Particulate food, food additive, supplement or pharmaceutical product consisting of a mixture of at least two types of particles, one being the probiotic pellet according to any of claims 1 to 8.